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SUBJECT: FRENCH RELIEF ASSISTANCE TO HAITI - SNAPSHOT:
FEBRUARY 9, 2010

REF: A. A. STATE 4807

[1](#)B. B. STATE 4854

[1](#)C. C. STATE 4909

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[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: As the international community transitions from the immediate crisis to the stabilization period before the long-term effort of reconstruction, France remains committed to sending physical and financial reinforcements to aid Haitian disaster victims. Following the conclusion of their emergency search and rescue missions, the GOF is now shifting its relief effort to assisting survivors of the earthquake, with a particular focus on orphaned children in Haiti. France remains a strong supporter of preparatory meetings on Haiti leading up to an international donors, conference that would address Haitian reconstruction. END SUMMARY.

FRENCH CONTRIBUTION TO THE RELIEF EFFORT, TO DATE

[1](#)2. (SBU) The French have sent 25 million euros (\$36 million) to Haiti in emergency aid, with 10 million euros (\$15 million) channeled through the UN and 2 million euros (\$3 million) in emergency food aid. French NGOs have collected over 40 million euros (\$57 million) in donations. France has also agreed to cancel 54 million euros (\$76 million) in remaining French-owned Haitian debt as agreed in the Paris Club. Since the earthquake, France has sent over 1,200 French citizens to Haiti to support the relief effort. As of February 8, France has 1,028 personnel engaged in Haiti, with 364 civil security members, 540 military, and 114 gendarmes. Nearly 1,700 metric tons of humanitarian material and equipment have been delivered since the French relief effort began on January 13. Five military aircraft conduct daily rotations between Haiti and the French Antilles on evacuation missions. As of February 9, France evacuated a total of 2,770 people, repatriating 1,642 individuals back to metropolitan France and 1,127 survivors to the West Indies. Of the 2770 evacuees, 1,221 were French citizens, 1,216 Haitian nationals, 47 citizens of the European Union, 57 third-country nationals, and 278 Haitian children currently involved in adoption proceedings by French families. French teams have confirmed the deaths of 25 French nationals, with an additional 9 French citizens still missing from the French community of over 1,400 in Haiti. French search and rescue teams, which officially completed their missions on January 22, have rescued a total of 16 survivors buried beneath the rubble. A team of 24 search and rescue personnel remain on the ground to continue clearing rubble for any remaining bodies. On February 8, Prime Minister Francois Fillon hosted a reception for hundreds of returning French civilian and military personnel to thank them for their humanitarian service in Haiti.

¶3. (SBU) In Haiti, the French field hospitals and advanced medical posts comprised of over 160 medical personnel have conducted 9,500 consultations, hospitalized over 1,300 people, and performed 364 surgeries to date. The French have installed four potable water stations with a capacity of producing enough drinking water for 40,000 people per day. The "Siroco" naval ship arrived on January 19 with a field hospital on board, allowing for the immediate care of wounded victims. The French naval ship "Francis Garnier" arrived on January 24, carrying 1,300 metric tons of material and four helicopters. In early February, the French military helped provide temporary relief to disaster victims by setting up 600 tents in downtown Port-au-Prince on the Champs de Mars, with a capacity to accommodate over 5,000 people. An additional 1,000 metric tons of humanitarian cargo is scheduled to be shipped from Martinique and Guadeloupe on February 18. In Paris, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Crisis Center continues to lead the French emergency response in Haiti and has mobilized a total of 225 agents to staff the crisis 24 hours a day. The two dedicated crisis hotlines have received nearly 20,000 calls as of February 8.

THE INITIAL FRENCH RECONSTRUCTION EFFORT

¶4. (SBU) The French reconstruction effort is led by Ambassador Pierre Dusquene, who is responsible for coordinating and implementing French aid in preparation for the international conference on the reconstruction of Haiti. The MFA has deployed 16 officers to support the coordination and reconstruction cell in the French Embassy in Port-au-Prince, in the hopes that the French mission will be fully operational for the start of the rebuilding phase. Although meetings in preparation of an international donors' conference have not yet been set, the GOF is fully mobilized to support the reconstruction effort and has committed to attending at all levels. On January 25, FM Bernard Kouchner

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participated in the preparatory conference on the reconstruction of Haiti in Montreal, where France committed to sending 100 gendarmes as a contingent of a larger EU mission.

GOF EVACUATES AND UNITES HAITIAN ORPHANS WITH FRENCH FAMILIES

¶5. (SBU) As of February 8, 277 Haitian orphans have been united with their adoptive French families in metropolitan France and others are expected to arrive in coming days. (Note: Each of the repatriations received official approval by the Haitian authorities.) On the ground, the French Embassy is conducting routine visits to nurseries in three-man teams consisting of an MFA consular officer, a doctor, and a volunteer firefighter to help identify and protect at-risk children in the adoption proceedings as well as to assess the exact needs of the various institutions on the ground. The French adoption teams in Haiti also work closely with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Program (WFP) to identify potential Haitian orphans. In conjunction with the French Embassy in Port-au-Prince and the MFA Crisis Center, the French Adoption Service (IAS) in Paris has worked to gather information from families and organizations authorized to adopt. In addition to the seven agents sent to Haiti to manage the international adoption process, the Crisis Center has established a team to manage the adoption records and to maintain contact with adoptive families in France. A special Crisis Center adoption hotline has been created and dedicated to fielding public inquiries. To date, over 909 families are in contact with the Crisis Center in regards to the adoption of 999 children.

¶6. (SBU) Under the authority of PM Fillon, the MFA is working to establish a Joint Commission with Haitian authorities to expedite the procedures for children whose

cases had reached the final stages of the adoption process. Speaking in front of Parliament on February 5, FM Kouchner said that France has a responsibility to "meet the expectations of French families while ensuring the interests of children under the Hague Convention." In collaboration with other relevant adoption agencies, the MFA has also established a Franco-Haitian ad-hoc committee to facilitate the processing of documentation used in the adoption procedure. The commission will make recommendations for cases where no decision has yet been made prior to the earthquake. Ambassador in charge of international adoptions, Jean-Paul Monchau, is in Port-au-Prince to present the proposal of a bilateral monitoring commission to examine the adoption procedures to the Haitian authorities. In compliance with international commitments and Haitian procedures, the proposal is meant to serve the best interest of the children. According to MFA desk officer for Haiti Frederic Paruta on February 8, the NGOs, members of adoption organizations, and the GOF are ready to participate in this committee but are awaiting the official response of Haitian authorities.

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